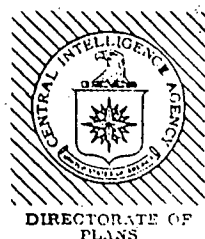


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SECRET

07 21 55 APR 69

CITE TDCS DB-315/01385-69

DIST 7 APRIL 1969

COUNTRY WEST GERMANY/EAST GERMANY

DOI EARLY MARCH 1969

SUBJECT EAST GERMAN INTEREST IN PURSUING PRISONER
RANSOM ARRANGEMENTS

ACQ GERMANY, BONN (10 MARCH 1969)

FIELD NO. EGN-4076

SOURCE A SENIOR FUNCTIONARY OF THE WEST GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SPD) WHO HAS REPORTED RELIABLY ON THIS TOPIC IN THE PAST. HE OBTAINED THIS INFORMATION IN AN EXTENDED CONVERSATION WITH A RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL OF THE ALL-GERMAN AFFAIRS MINISTRY AND THE WEST BERLIN PRISONER EXCHANGE LAWYER JUERGEN STANGE.

1. AS OF EARLY MARCH 1969, THE EAST GERMANS WERE PRESSING FOR RECEIPT OF THE WEST GERMAN LISTS FOR EAST GERMAN PRISONERS WHOM THE WEST GERMANS WANTED TO SEE RELEASED. THE EAST GERMANS EMPHASIZED THEIR DESIRE TO GET RID OF LONG-TERM PRISONERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. A NEW FACTOR IN THE PRISONER RANSOM ARRANGEMENTS FOR 1969 WILL BE THE INCLUSION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WHO HAVE NOT YET BEEN SENTENCED BUT CAN EXPECT TO BE SENTENCED DURING THE YEAR 1969. (SOURCE COMMENT: THE WEST BERLIN PRISONER EXCHANGE LAWYER STANGE THINKS THAT THE EAST GERMANS ARE MAKING AN EFFORT TO GET RID OF ALL THE OLD CASES, SO THAT

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AFTER 1969 NEGOTIATIONS WILL CONCERN ONLY NEW PRISONERS. HE THINKS THE EAST GERMANS ARE MOTIVATED BY A PARTICULARLY STRONG NEED FOR FOREIGN CURRENCY.) (HEADQUARTERS COMMENT: THE EAST GERMANS ARE NOT KNOWN TO HAVE ANY MORE URGENT NEED THAN USUAL FOR FOREIGN CURRENCY. STANGE'S REMARK IS ALSO PUZZLING BECAUSE IN THE PAST WEST GERMAN RANSOMS FOR PRISONERS HELD IN EAST GERMANY HAVE BEEN PAID IN GOODS NOT CASH; IT RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT THE EAST GERMANS HAVE DEMANDED. ALL-GERMAN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL LUDWIG REHLINGER PREDICTED IN SEPTEMBER 1968 THAT IN FUTURE THE EAST GERMANS WOULD DEMAND HARD CURRENCY RATHER THAN COMMODITIES IN PAYMENT FOR PRISONERS; SEE TDCSDB-315/03473-68.)

2. THE EAST GERMAN PRISONER EXCHANGE LAWYER WOLFGANG VOGEL HAS CARRIED WORD THAT THE EAST GERMANS ARE SATISFIED AT THE WAY THE SOVIET SPY HEINZ FELFE'S RELEASE WAS HANDLED. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT WESTERN JOURNALISTS HAVE LEARNED ONLY ABOUT THE RELEASE IN EXCHANGE OF THREE STUDENTS IMPRISONED IN THE USSR AND HAVE NOT LEARNED ABOUT THE 20 AGENTS OF THE GERMAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE WHO WERE ALSO RELEASED. (FIELD COMMENT: FOR ACCOUNTS OF THE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS CONCERNING THE RELEASE OF FELFE AND THE EAST GERMAN THREATS WHICH PRECEDED IT, SEE TDCSDB-315/00599-69 AND TDCSDB-315/00520-69.) THE EAST GERMANS SAY THAT THIS GOOD EXPERIENCE HAS A FAVORABLE INFLUENCE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR FURTHER RELEASES.

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3. FIELD DISSEM: EMBASSY BONN (ALSO SENT []).

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